

# DESERT AIR MONITOR



A PUBLICATION OF THE MOJAVE DESERT AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT



## HIGH DESERT MEETS FEDERAL AIR QUALITY HEALTH STANDARD

The High Desert's air quality has met the federal one-hour national ambient air quality standard for ozone, according to a February 25 letter received by the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District from the California Air Resources Board. An area is found to have attained the federal 0.12 parts per million standard if there are no violations recorded, based on three consecutive calendar years of complete, quality assured and certified air monitoring data.

**"It's a great day for the health of High Desert residents and its economy."**

MDAQMD Governing Board Chair Barbara Riordan

In their letter to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, CARB requested that the federal agency make a determination that air quality in the region met the standard, based on a review of local ozone data from 2009 to 2012, which showed that the number of days per calendar year with a maximum hourly concentration greater than 0.12 ppm was one day or less. 2013 data also indicated that no days exceeded the one hour ozone standard in the High Desert. In sharp contrast 77 days exceeded the standard in 1994. "We are ecstatic that the state has finally recognized the clean air efforts of the High Desert's businesses and residents," commented MDAQMD Executive Director Eldon Heaston. "This milestone brings our region one step closer to achieving regulatory equity and insuring that the High Desert is not penalized for pollution it does not create."

The Federal Clean Air Act requires USEPA to set standards for pollutants which are considered harmful to public health and the environment, such as carbon monoxide and ozone, the primary component of photochemical smog. These standards have been progressively tightened through the years, as health studies and technology have determined that more stringent thresholds are needed to protect asthmatics and other sensitive individuals.

In 1991, a portion of the Southeast Desert Air Basin - which includes the Victor Valley/Barstow region of San Bernardino County located in the MDAQMD - was designated nonattainment for the 0.12 ppm federal standard, based on air monitoring data collected within the basin. Although the 0.12 ppm standard was subsequently revoked in 1997 by the USEPA - which had replaced it with a more stringent eight hour standard - many regions continued to have regulatory obligations under the former standard, based on court challenges to its rescission.

Meanwhile, the Federal Clean Act required the MDAQMD to reduce its ground-level ozone standards to meet the revoked standard by 2007. When the MDAQMD was unable to meet this

mandate-based on monitored ozone levels in the region which are overwhelmingly impacted by windblown pollutants transported into the area from the Los Angeles basin, the USEPA threatened to impose punitive fines on all major emission sources in the region, unless they reduced their emission levels to no more than 80% of 2007 levels. For local cement manufacturer CEMEX, those fines could have been as high as \$11.5 million.

In an effort to avert the fines from further devastating the High Desert's struggling economy, the MDAQMD's Governing Board adopted a "backstop rule" which aggregated emissions from major facilities in the area and compared them to federal standards, instead of targeting individual facilities. With the High Desert poised to meet the federal one-hour standard, the daunting fines which could have crippled the local economy are no longer looming.

"The High Desert's air has met a once seemingly unattainable air quality standard," said MDAQMD Governing Board Chair Barbara Riordan, adding, "It's a great day for the health of High Desert residents and its economy."

## MDAQMD Participates in Annual South Coast AQMD Governing Board Retreat

William A. Burke, Chairman of the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Governing Board, extended an invitation to MDAQMD Board Chair Barbara Riordan to participate in the Diamond Bar-based district's annual retreat in Palm Desert on May 16, 2014, for the purpose of discussing joint district interests and mutual legislative goals.

Supervisor Josie Gonzales had previously discussed with MDAQMD Executive Director Eldon Heaston a desire to advance discussions regarding ways in which both agencies change could collaborate on mutual projects.

Supervising Air Quality Engineer Alan De Salvio, MDAQMD Board Member Robert Leone, and Board Member Terry Campbell, joined Heaston in attending the meeting and presenting a PowerPoint presentation on "MDAQMD & SCAQMD: Cooperative Air Quality Efforts - Past & Future" which outlined MDAQMD planning and transport issues, joint planning challenges, historical joint efforts, and future opportunities for joint cooperation.

"The meeting was very productive and provided an exceptional opportunity for the exchange of information and an understanding of the uniqueness of each air district,"



(L-R): MDAQMD Board Chair Riordan, MDAQMD Board Member Benoit, SCAQMD Board Member Burke and MDAQMD Board Member Campbell confer during SCAQMD's Retreat.

stated MDAQMD Chair Barbara Cram Riordan, adding that "The group tasked our two Executive Officers with developing some important opportunities for mutual efforts."



The Desert Air Monitor is a publication of the Mojave Desert AQMD's **COMMUNITY RELATIONS & EDUCATION OFFICE**  
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**Eldon Heaston**  
Executive Director

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## MDAQMD's 2nd Annual Solar Oven Cook-Off a Sizzling Success!

For the second consecutive year, teams of students from throughout the High Desert gathered to show off their design and cooking skills during this all-day event on June 15th. The event was held at the Victor Valley Museum in Apple Valley and despite 90 degree-plus temperatures, more than 50 students and advisors as well as event sponsors, judges, and volunteers enjoyed the friendly competitive atmosphere.



Solar "Sun-chiladas"

Armed with materials such as cardboard, plexiglass, aluminum foil and home insulation, the fourth- through twelfth-graders from across the High Desert participated in the event. The one-of-a-kind event was hosted by the MDAQMD and the Mojave Environmental Education Consortium (MEEC), and organizers say it's the only one of its kind anywhere in Southern California. Teams of two-to-five students from schools throughout the High Desert designed and built creative solar cookers and developed original delicious recipes for the cooker and recipe competitions. During the cooking process, teams were judged on the creativity and design of their solar cookers by a panel of four judges. A separate group of four judges also participated in the recipe judging.

"They stepped up their game this year, without a doubt," said Violette Roberts, Community Relations & Education Manager for the MDAQMD, explaining that recipes were more complex and included no pre-cooked ingredients.

"They were very enterprising and entrepreneurial," said Christie Robinson, MDAQMD Event Coordinator. "Some teams made three dishes and even included an ice cream desert, and most were beautifully plated in their presentations to the judges."

Recipes included zesty chocolate chip cookies, variations of vegetable lasagna, ground beef enchiladas (right), vegetable chowder, kabobs, bruschetta and snicker-doodle cookie ice cream sandwiches. The winning recipes will be available as a free downloadable cookbook this fall at [www.meeconline.com](http://www.meeconline.com).

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The Teams proudly pose with their awards

**DID YOU KNOW** WALKING, BICYCLING, OR TAKING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION TO WORK REDUCES FUEL CONSUMPTION BY 100%?







# MDAQMD Presents at 107th Annual Air & Waste Management Association Conference in Long Beach

**M**DAQMD Community Relations & Education Manager Violette Roberts and CRE Specialist Christie Robinson were invited to present workshops at the 107th Annual Air & Waste Management Association Conference & Exhibition on June 24-27, 2014 at the Long Beach Convention Center.

Roberts was a presenter during the "The Twin Challenge of Air Districts – Community & Education Outreach" panel which focused on how air quality agencies address the "twin challenges" of community and education outreach, and their strong impact on how Californians view their level of involvement in environmental sustainability and air quality issues. Roberts was joined on the panel by Lisa Tanaka O'Malley, South Coast AQMD; Sam Atwood, South Coast AQMD; Lisha Smith, South Coast AQMD; and Lisa Fasano, Bay Area AQMD.

Roberts and Robinson also presented hands-on lessons during two "Train the Trainer" workshops using AWMA's Environmental Resource Guides for teachers.

MDAQMD was a Conference Silver Sponsor and also hosted the Young Professional Mentor Breakfast. The conference featured a technical program boasting over 400 speakers and more than 100 exhibitors displaying the latest products and services. Social tours, networking events, and professional development courses were presented by leading instructors.



Workshop participants inspect samples from the "Nasty Waters" activity during a "Train the Trainer" ERG workshop.

## Permit Fees to Increase 3.25% January 1

**E**ffective January 1, 2015, the MDAQMD Governing Board has approved a 3.25% fee increase for all permits issued by the District. Pursuant to Rule 301, the base application fee will now be \$253, while a Change of Ownership will be \$145.

Fee increases are based on a portion of the CPI of the Los Angeles-Riverside-Orange County area for the percent of change of February 2015 from February

2014 and vary by cost of permitted source. Permit fees are the District's number one source of revenue and allow the District to continue implementing and enforcing the Federal and California Clean Air Act and District Rules and Regulations. The CPI adjustment will ensure District fee revenue is in line with the cost of doing business and avoid the potential for larger fee increases in the future.



## Mojave Green Program Recognizes Outstanding Fueling Sites

**T**he Mojave Green Gas Station Program is a positive-incentive program aimed at recognizing gas stations that work proactively to prevent air pollution at their establishments. Fueling stations which pass their annual air quality inspections error-free and have logged no violations over the past year are eligible to be named Mojave Green Gas Stations.

The MDAQMD Mojave Green Gas Station decal is awarded to stations which meet program criteria. Qualified stations also receive a congratulatory letter from the MDAQMD's Executive Director, camera-ready copies of the Mojave Green decal for use in their ads, and are

listed on the MDAQMD's online Mojave Green Gas Station Directory.

The MDAQMD is committed to helping small businesses such as fueling stations identify solutions to source reductions through educational and technical assistance. A variety of free compliance services, including on-site technical consultations are available through the District. For more information on the program, call (760) 245-1661 extension 6104.



**DID YOU KNOW** AN AVERAGE AMERICAN BREATHES TWO GALLONS OF AIR PER MINUTE WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY 3,400 GALLONS OF AIR EACH DAY, AND THAT INHALING AIR POLLUTION TAKES AWAY AT LEAST 1-2 YEARS OF A TYPICAL HUMAN LIFE?





*Desert Tortoise Facility Sign*

opening of the new Ivanpah Desert Tortoise Research Facility in Mountain Pass, CA.

IDTRF partners Molycorp purchased the property and Chevron provided the funding to build the facility.

The IDTRF has been designed specifically to conduct research into juvenile tortoise survival, identified as a key factor in recovery of this federally listed threatened species. The facility includes a LEED Silver-Certified laboratory building and predator-proof tortoise enclosures containing native vegetation. Managed by the National Park Trust since it opened in 2012, the facility is now being transferred to the Mojave National Preserve. Scientists from the University of California, Davis, and the University of Georgia are researching the effectiveness of raising juvenile tortoises in captivity to increase survival rates, and are developing repeatable protocols for this technique. Since the facility opened, 185 desert tortoise hatchlings have emerged within the protected facility and 46 hatchlings with attached GPS tracking devices have subsequently been released.

## MDAQMD Participates in Ivanpah Desert Tortoise Research Facility Dedication

**O**n September 4th, Eldon Heaston and Community Relations & Education staff attended the grand



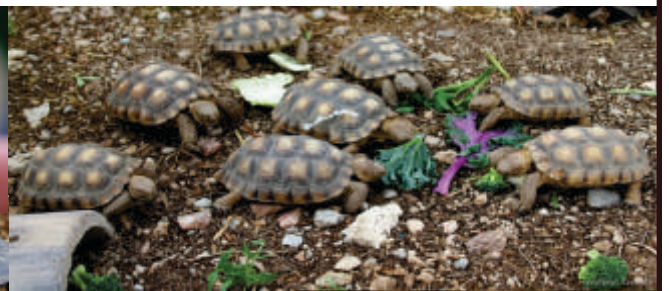
*Baby tortoises are tracked with GPS tracking device.*



*Heaston (wearing white cap) views hatchlings in one of the protected enclosures*



*IDTRF partners Molycorp purchased the property and Chevron provided the funding to build the facility.*



*Since the facility opened, 185 desert tortoise hatchlings have emerged within the protected facility and 46 hatchlings with attached GPS tracking devices have subsequently been released.*



**DID YOU KNOW** THAT STRONG PERFUME CAN BE AS BAD TO BREATHE AS CIGARETTE SMOKE?



**DID YOU KNOW** AIR POLLUTION AROUND CITIES IS CLEARLY VISIBLE FROM SPACE?





# SHOOTING THE BREEZE



## Samorajski Receives L.A. County Commendation

**M**DAQMD Information System Specialist Trevor Samorajski recently received a Commendation from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for his work efforts during the devastating Powerhouse Fire which took place in Santa Clarita and the Antelope Valley in June of 2013. The Commendation recognized his work during high risk evacuations in areas with imminent fire danger. As a Reserve Deputy working with Search and Rescue, Samorajski was tasked with identifying areas under imminent fire danger, and with



initiating evacuations in areas where many homes were burned. It was estimated that evacuations numbered in the thousands and that the fire was responsible for burning 58 structures and lasted for 10 days.

The Commendation Presentation of Scrolls to Samorajski and several other Los Angeles County Reserve Deputies and Civilian Firefighter Volunteers for their efforts in evacuating residents during the 2013 Powerhouse Fire was performed by Supervisor Mike Antonovich.



Trevor Samorajski (right) sets out on a search and rescue operation.

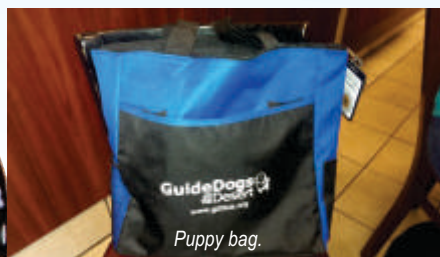
## INTERNS

### Summer Interns Learn Organization Skills

**S**ummer Interns Lynne Nowak and Elexia Koch volunteered a good part of their summer break working for the MDAQMD's Community Relations & Education office this summer. Lynne, who is the daughter of the MDAQMD's own District Counsel Karen Nowak, will be attending Western Washington University in the fall as a Marine Biology Major. Elexia will be attending UC Davis as a Biochemistry major. The interns did an exceptional job of helping CRE get organized and even toured Nutro Products and Mitsubishi Cement during their time at the MDAQMD.



Elexia Koch (left) and Lynne Nowak



**M**DAQMD staff recently emptied their pockets of loose change and helped fill a "Pennies for Puppies" bank in their break room. The proceeds totaling more than \$25 provided two "Puppy Bags" for the Guide Dogs of the Desert. Guide Dogs of the Desert

breeds 95% of the puppies that are used in their puppy raising program and this year had a bumper crop of 36 puppies that are currently being placed in foster puppy raiser homes at approximately 12 weeks of age until they are between 18 to 20 months of age. Each puppy raiser is provided with a well-stocked "puppy bag" that provides some basic items such as a feed bowl, special training harness, chew and fun toys. The cost of all veterinary care, food, toys, damages, and travel expenses are the puppy raiser's responsibility, so these little "puppy care bags" are an essential start for these future Guide and PTSD Service dogs for

**DID YOU KNOW** THAT AIR POLLUTION FROM CHINA HAS BEEN TRACKED TO THE CENTRAL VALLEY OF CALIFORNIA?





## California Celebrates 30 Years of Smog Check Advancement



**M**obile sources are among the largest contributors to air pollution in California. Although California has yet to meet federal health standards for ozone pollution, air quality has vastly improved since 1984 when the Bureau of Automotive Repair took a huge step toward reducing mobile source air pollution by implementing the Smog Check Program to regulate and reduce the amount of air pollution emitted in California. The program inspects the level of pollutants emitted by vehicles and identifies, then repairs or retires gross-polluting cars.

Originally enacted in 1982, the law actually went into effect in March 1984. Since that time, it has been modified and refined several times, including in 2010 when the program began phasing out tailpipe testing and instead began utilizing the vehicle's own emissions monitoring systems (as part of the vehicle's on-board diagnostics systems) to evaluate emissions.

According to the BAR's website, the Smog Check Program inspects

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State of California  
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approximately 10 million vehicles every year and reduces emissions by 400 tons each year. Over the past 30 years, in combination with cleaner engines, California's Smog Check Program has helped improve the Golden State's air quality. A report released by the

Environment California Research and Policy Center reveals a drop in nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds emissions from 5,000 tons/day to 1,000 tons/day since 1975.

After 30 years, the Smog Check Program continues to improve and makes great strides towards reducing air pollution. The STAR Program was recently implemented into the Smog Check Program to assist vehicles with exceptionally high emission levels most at risk of failing the test. Through this innovative program, the BAR evaluates and certifies stations and inspectors that meet the STAR Program requirements and performance standards. By focusing more on higher polluting vehicles, the STAR Program continues to improve air quality in California.

# CASH FOR GRASS

## SCRAPPING PROGRAM ON THE RISE



An Apple Valley family replaces grass for a kid-friendly play area.

**A**s of this summer, twenty-five High Desert residents who replaced their lawns with water-efficient landscaping through the Mojave Water Agency's "Cash for Grass" program have also scrapped gas-powered lawnmowers and earned \$50 gift cards, since the inception of the MDAQMD's parallel incentive program last year. With

the average gas-powered mower producing the emissions-equivalent of 40 cars, the MDAQMD's "Cash for Grass" Lawnmower Scrapping Program is expected to achieve significant emission reductions in the region. For more information call (760) 245-1661 ext. 1885.



### Permit Activity

## October 2013 – August 2014

Active Permits	4,012
Permitted Facilities	1,529
Number of Applications	235

### Compliance Activity

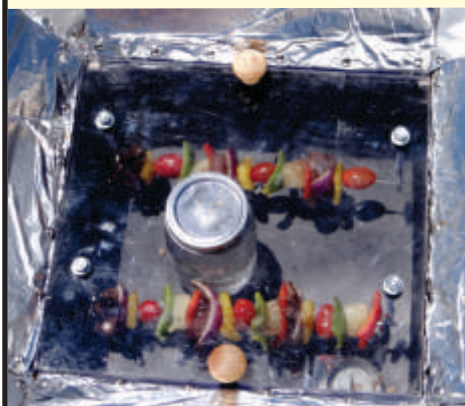
## October 2013 – August 2014

Complaints	172
Notices of Violation	69
Certificates of Occupancy	600





## MDAQMD's 2nd Annual Solar Oven Cook-Off a Sizzling Success! Cont'd from pg. 2



Shishkabobs cooking in solar oven

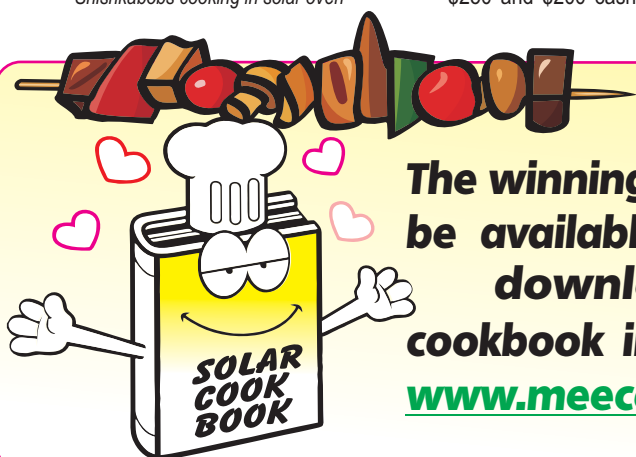
"I think it was really good because it gives kids a chance to experience what it is to be in the environment," said Michael Rodriguez Jr., 11, of Cameron Elementary School in Barstow. "My teacher really got me into solar ovens, wind power and water power. If I had one of these at home, I would cook regular snacks in it."

The students spent all day at the event, which began at 9:30 a.m. and ended close to 4:00 p.m. Each team constructed their own solar ovens which were required to be no bigger than two-by-two feet in size and 15 pounds in weight.

First place teams in three age groups took home \$250 and \$200 cash prizes.

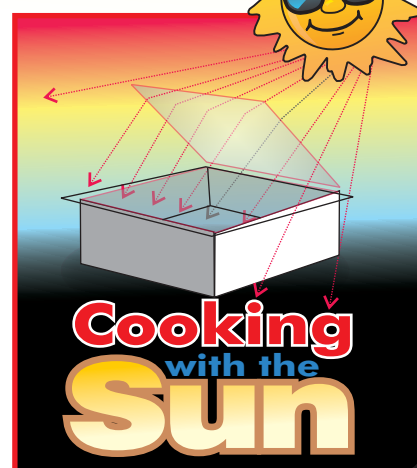


Team preparing food for cooking.



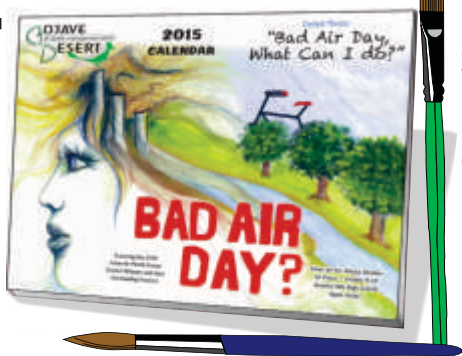
### Recipes

**The winning recipes will be available as a free downloadable cookbook in the fall at [www.meeconline.com](http://www.meeconline.com).**



## 2015 Calendar Now Available

**"B**ad Air Day, What Can I Do?" was the theme of the MDAQMD's 18th Annual Clean Air Month Poster Contest. The competition drew more than 400 entries from fledgling artists throughout the MDAQMD's jurisdiction, which encompasses the High Desert portion of San Bernardino County and Riverside County's Palo Verde Valley.



Twelve winners were selected in four grade categories—K-2; 3-5; 6-8; and 9-12. During an awards ceremony held at the MDAQMD on May 28th, winners received gift cards ranging in denomination from \$25 to \$100, depending on place awarded. Teachers whose students were selected as contest winners were also recognized for encouraging their participation. Each winning poster and its artist is featured in the annual calendar.

The contest was co-sponsored by the Daily Press, the Air & Waste Management Association's Mojave Desert Chapter and Victor Valley Transit Authority, which also awarded bicycles to two contest participants, whose names were drawn at random from all entries.

The MDAQMD's annual poster contest is held each May as a vehicle for raising awareness amongst

High Desert youngsters about the pivotal role individual actions and choices play in protecting air quality. The MDAQMD's 2015 Clean Air Month Poster Contest Calendars are now available... stop by the MDAQMD and pick up your free copy or contact us at (760) 245-1661 extension 6101 today.

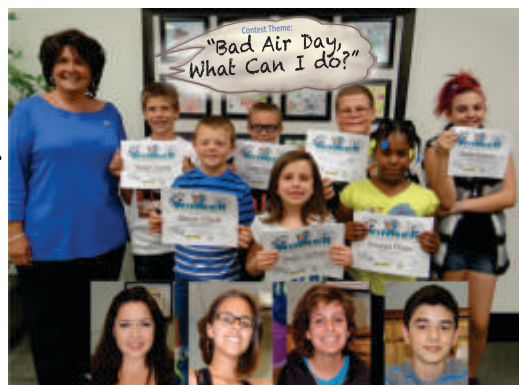


Photo: (Above) MDAQMD Governing Board Alternate/Town of Apple Valley Council Member Barb Stanton (far left) poses with winners of the 2014 Poster Contest.

**DID YOU KNOW** THAT SWITCHING TO MORE EFFICIENT AND CLEANER FUELS INSTEAD OF SOLID FUELS (WOOD, BIOMASS) CAN HELP YOU TO REDUCE INDOOR AIR POLLUTION?



[www.mdaqmd.ca.gov](http://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov)

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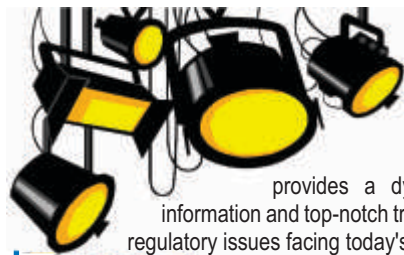
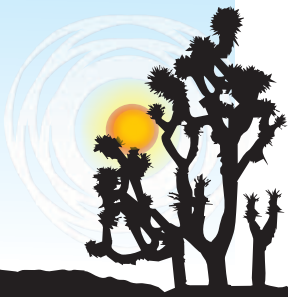
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## 2014 CDAWG to Spotlight California's Air Quality Issues

**F**ast becoming one of California's most popular air quality events, the annual CDAWG conference provides a dynamic forum for the exchange of information and top-notch training on timely, relevant air quality and regulatory issues facing today's environmental professional. The 2014 California Desert Air Working Group Conference will be held October 8 & 9, at the Pala Casino Spa & Resort in Pala, California.

This year's Conference theme is "Fostering Sustainability Through Collaborative Clean Air Partnerships" and invited guests include Richard Corey, Executive Officer, California Air Resources Board; Kerry Drake, Associate Director/Air Division, USEPA Region IX; and Shasta C. Gaughen, PhD,

Environmental Director, Pala Band of Mission Indians.

Topics will include: "Implications of OEHHA Risk Guidance for AB2588 and CEQA Health Risk Requirements Compliance;" "The Future of High Speed Rail in California;" and "Interagency Challenges to Solving California's Future Energy Needs" just to name a few.

New this year – a special half-day pre-conference workshop on Western Air Quality Issues and Western Regional Air Partnership study results presented by Tom Moore of WRAP, which will be held on Tuesday, October 7. This workshop is a must for regulators and anyone with an interest in learning about the effects of transported emissions on future air quality planning efforts in Western states. For registration information, visit [www.mdaqmd.ca.gov](http://www.mdaqmd.ca.gov).

